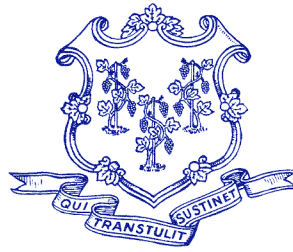


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February 23, 2015

Testimony to the Joint Committee on Public Health
SB 684 An Act Concerning Training in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, Senator Crisco, Representative Riley, Senator Markley, Representative Srinivasan, and members of the Committee on Public Health:

My name is Beth Bye, State Senator for the fifth district towns of West Hartford, Farmington, Burlington, and Bloomfield.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of SB 684 which aims to change the way we approach CPR training in Connecticut public high schools. By augmenting the high school health curriculum with education in CPR training, the state is taking critical steps to create the next generation of lifesavers in our communities.

A national campaign, led by the American Heart and American Stroke Associations, strives for all states to require CPR training for their high school students. Students can be provided with necessary skills in less than thirty minutes, and physical practice on a manikin rather than watching a video is proven to help students retain this valuable life skill. New York became the twenty-first state to require CPR for all public high school students, and Connecticut has an incredible opportunity to become the twenty-second.

Nearly 400,000 cases of out-of-hospital cardiac arrests occur every year in the United States. The majority of these are fatal, according to the American Heart Association. Data from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) demonstrates that over 4,000 residents in Connecticut will die from out-of-hospital sudden cardiac arrest (SCA). Only thirty percent of victims receive some form of CPR treatment in such situations, and if that treatment is not administered in the first three to five minutes, there is a small ten percent survival rate. This rate could be doubled or tripled by educating people to recognize an emergency and provide treatment that is both timely and effective.

The state of Connecticut has already taken steps to address this issue in passing HB 5348 in 2012. This bill required the State Board of Education to direct the State Department of Education to make CPR/AED curriculum guidelines for school districts accessible to local and regional boards of education. However, there is so much more that we can do to protect our residents.

I ask the Committee on Public Health to draft a bill that will assist in making our communities heart safe by empowering our students. I ask the committee to:

- Amend section 10-16b (a) Proscribed Course of Study of the general statutes to require CPR training in public high schools, including a psychomotor skills component and education regarding the use of automatic electronic defibrillators (AEDs). Requiring training on the use of AEDs provides students with knowledge about how AED's can stop an abnormal heart rhythm
- Amend section 10-16b (d) to exclude provision (7) training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of automatic external defibrillators
- Allow for local and regional boards of education to accept donations or grants to purchase necessary materials needed for CPR/AED training.

Let us take a lead in making Connecticut a safer environment for its citizens. I am open to any questions the members might have.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Beth Bye". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Beth Bye